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ABSTRACT

A lack of education is a major cause of poverty among many Kentucky citizens. In 1986, Kentucky's dropout rate was the second highest of the 50 states. That same year, Kentucky established the Parent and Child Education (PACE) Program in an effort to combat the problems of insufficient education and poverty that tend to be perpetuated from generation to generation within the state. The program, which targets families rather than individuals, is designed to increase the educational expectations of parents for their preschool children, raise the educational levels and family skills of parents, help parents obtain their high school equivalency diplomas, and improve the learning skills of young children. The PACE program is open to parents who lack a high school diploma and have 3- or 4-year-old children. It is available in several areas of the state, but found mostly in rural areas where the dropout rate is highest. The daily program schedule includes separate instruction sessions for the adults and children, as well as time for joint activities. The program also provides breakfast, lunch, and transportation to and from class. Even though funding and participation remain a problem, the positive impact of Kentucky's PACE program is evident in its growth, national recognition, and participants' academic improvement. (TJQ)

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